Scottish Workforce & Staff Governance Committee

Friday 14 May 2010

Conf. Room 2, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh

Present:
- Michael Fuller - Unite, Chair
- John Boland - Unite
- George Brechin - NHS Fife
- John Callaghan - Society of Chiropodists
- Audrey Cowie - SGHD
- Joyce Davidson - British Medical Association
- Pat Dawson - NHS Lothian
- Alistair Flowerdew - Golden Jubilee
- David Forbes - Unison
- Anne Gent - NHS Highland
- Lynne Khindria, NHS Lanarkshire
- Lillian Macer - NHS Lanarkshire
- Gordon McKay - Unison
- Pamela McLachlan - Scottish Ambulance Service
- Patricia McNally - Chartered Society of Physiotherapists
- Jackie Mitchell - Royal College of Midwives
- Norman Provan - Royal College of Nursing
- Ian Reid - NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde
- Mandy Robertson - Unison
- Ray Stewart - Chair of Employee Directors
- Elizabeth Stow - Society of Radiographers
- Anne Thomson - Royal College of Nursing
- Dorothy Wright - NHS Education for Scotland

In attendance:
- Peter Samuel, Nottingham University
- Liz Curran - NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde - Speaker
- David Faggiani - Scottish Government - Minute Taker
- Jo Gillies - Scottish Government
- Alison Johnston - Scottish Government
- John Nicholls - Scottish Government
- Mike Martin - SGHD
- Mary Cuthbert - Health Scotland
- Lorna Renwick - Health Scotland
- Claire Brennan - EES
1. Item 1 - Welcome, Introductions and apologies.

Michael Fuller took the Chair. Michael welcomed everyone to the meeting and all present introduced themselves. Apologies were recorded as above. Mike Martin, Mary Cuthbert, Lorna Renwick and Claire Brennan were welcomed for their specific contributions to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2010 and matters arising.

The minutes were taken as correct, apart from a minor amendment to include John Callaghan on the attendance list. Due to persistent difficulties around attendance for some members, the Chair re-emphasised that asking colleagues to attend Committee meetings in the place of an absent member was encouraged.

**Action:** Chair to circulate reminder regarding substitute attendance at meetings

**Matters Arising (those not on the Agenda)**

**PVG**

A query was raised in relation to student payments, following discussion at the previous meeting. Some confusion was expressed over varying rates for different student payment brackets.

It was intimated that there should be a consistent approach across NHS Scotland. It was agreed that the PVG team should be made aware of the financial pressures that NHS Boards are already facing due to the collective impact of different Scottish Government policies.

**Action:** SGHD Officials to investigate this issue with PVG team and report back to Committee
PAMSA/Occupational Health

It was agreed that following the group's disbandment the regular PAMSA update would be dropped from the Committee's Agenda in future. Jo Gillies reported to the Committee that the new short-life Occupational Health and Safety Forum would produce a draft Strategy later in the year. It was agreed that regular updates would be provided to SWAG. The Chair also requested a personal copy of the minutes.

It was noted that there were concerns regarding the future plans for OHSxtra and whether Boards would still be funding this.

The Committee expressed the view that members needed to be kept up-to-date regarding further developments, and that Boards needed to be aware of any change in resourcing policy.

Action: Chair to be sent minutes of relevant forum.
Action: Co-Chairs to issue letter to NHS Boards emphasising the value of occupational support services, such as OHSxtra.

Statutory Instrument on new Employee Director Appointments

A letter had been issued as an interim arrangement some time ago for new Employee Director appointments and some members expressed confusion as no final letter had been forthcoming.

Action: SGHD officials to check on status of letter

3. Healthcare Support Workers

Audrey Cowie announced to the Committee that a code of conduct for Support Workers was to be introduced imminently. Audrey and Ali Johnston would discuss with John Davidson a communications exercise to co-incide with the issue of the PINs. The Chair expressed the view that both the sequence of the PINs and the terms and conditions of the program itself could benefit from closer examination to avoid confusion. The progress made in this area was agreed by Committee members as a very welcome development.

4. Reshaping Care for Elderly People

Michael Martin gave a presentation on Partnership Arrangements for Elderly Care, with particular focus on adaptation to future demographic trends in Scotland.
Health and Social Care expenditure was also examined, and suggestions were raised as to forms of useful re-distribution, especially in regards to emergency beds. It was suggested that independence for the elderly needed to become a policy priority, with as much support for unpaid carers and community networks as possible. A timeline of developments from April 2008 was presented, and 8 different development workstreams were outlined. Finally, emphasis was placed on the unsustainability of current spending allocations.

Reactions were taken from members. The Committee agreed that the scale of the task was daunting, to say the least, and had a brief discussion regarding possible legislative and financial challenges and implications for the Workforce across NHSScotland. It was agreed that correct strategies would need to be primarily implemented through appropriate educational structures. SWAG offered representatives to participate on the proposed working groups.

**Action:** Presentation to be circulated to members for further reference

**Action:** SWAG Committee to decide on useful attendance at working groups, in co-ordination with Michael Martin

### 5. Healthy Working Lives - Update to Tobacco Policy

Mary Cuthbert and Lorna Renwick presented an update to the Committee on recent guidance regarding workplace anti-smoking policies in NHSScotland. Co-operation with staff on the issues involved were agreed to be a priority for any effective lasting progress. It was pointed out that the NHS Healthy Working Lives Criteria would need to be adjusted, most usefully by considering the relevant rules of the European Network of Smoke-free Hospitals (ENSH), which considers a very holistic view of patient and staff data.

It was emphasised by the Committee that this area of debate is necessary to approach with care, not least because of the estimated 40000 NHSScotland employees who smoke and would be affected by any change to national or Board-level guidelines. It was expressed that in practice whole-hospital-grounds smoking bans were in the main impossible to police and undeliverable. The need for staff to be treated consistently across NHSScotland was underlined. The particular difficulty of dealing with care-in-the-community guidance was discussed.

It was generally concluded that Board Policy for Staff on Premises needed to be re-examined. The Committee expressed firm, unanimous support for the principle of reduction of staff smoking levels, but reiterated that regulations would need to be both tactful, proportionate and implementable. The need to balance employee
rights with any drive towards smoking cessation was emphatically asserted by all members.

**Action:** Update on advisory decisions to be circulated to Committee members - Mary Cuthbert and Lorna Renwick to attend next meeting on 20 August

6. **Workforce Planning**

In view of Ricky Verrall’s absence, John Nicholls gave a short summary of the Workforce planning situation. He emphasised that NHS Boards have a duty to share Workforce plans with staff-side colleagues and SGHD. John stated that SGHD were not responsible for approving sign off and that was a NHS Board decision but would have sight of what was being proposed in the plans. As a result of the economic climate, Workforce Plan deadlines for 2011 have been extended beyond the usual April date.

It was re-iterated that there were no plans in NHSScotland for compulsory redundancies. John said any changes to staffing levels would be through natural wastage, service re-design, and vacancy management, with Voluntary Early Retirement used as a last resort.

Members stated strongly that this was a national issue, and that estimates of reforms on the impact of clinical care would have to provided across Boards. In addition, robust Workforce Planning tools were felt to be underused in terms of staff projections. It was underlined that this would have to be considered both in terms of the Quality Strategy, and of the upcoming UK Emergency Budget at the end of June.

**Action:** Ricky Verrall to produce Report on process for next SWAG Committee meeting on 20 August

**Action:** Discussion of Workforce Plans to take place at 20 August meeting

**Action:** Auditors’ report on Voluntary redundancy exercise at NHS Grampian to be circulated to Committee members and discussed at 20 August meeting

7. **SWISS Project**

Claire Brennan provided a brief update on the project. A full business case for an HR System was said to be in development, with a contract at draft stage. Data protection would be a top priority for this system. Members were invited to attend an all-day development event at Stirling Management Centre on 3 June. It was estimated that the system’s start-up would not be until 2011.
The Committee agreed that shared services in terms of this system should definitely help to produce better working. Claire was invited to attend the next meeting to provide a further update.

8. PIN Review

In the absence of John Davidson, Alison Johnston reported that Equal Opportunities PIN would come to the next meeting. It was agreed that SWAG Secretariat, at their next meeting, would have sight of the consultation comments and the final document following consultation of the Dignity at Work PIN. The Committee was reminded that it was not possible to cost PIN guidelines at Board levels and this should be left to HRDs and MSG. It was reiterated that the PIN policies were minimum standards and part of Terms and Conditions.

Action: Secretariat to finalise guidelines at next meeting, and report back to Committee in August

9. NHSScotland 2010 Staff Survey

It was reported that the Cabinet Secretary had approved the Survey to go ahead and John Davidson had set up a working group to progress. Alison Johnston would speak to John Davidson to ensure appropriate Staff Side membership on group.

Action: All Johnston to speak to John Davidson re Membership

10. NHSScotland Manual Handling Passport

Alison Johnston reported that the Chief Executives and the Health and Safety Community had been well sighted on the document but following discussion it was evident that there was a need for further consultation and asked the Committee who they thought should be further consulted.

Action: Document to be virtually circulated and feedback collated. Alison Johnston to liaise with Norman Provan

11. KSF Document

The Committee was instructed to note this document.

12. AOCB

i) Working Well
Jo Gillies reported that the Cab Sec had announced funding of £750,000 to support the Working Well Agenda through a range of activities during 2010/11. This would be taken forward in partnership, with a priority focus on ensuring that value would be added to current activities.

**Action:** Jo Gillies to feed back to SWAG on specific details of programme

**Close of meeting**

David Faggiani  
Scottish Government Health Directorates  
18 May 2010